Regional Sustainability: Planning, Implementation, and Measurement

Carissa Schively Slotterback, PhD, AICP
Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota

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Insights

Highlight efforts to plan for, implement, and measure sustainability at multiple scales

...focus on regions
Context

- HUD-DOT-EPA alignment
- HUD Sustainable Communities Grant
  Twin Cities + Region 5
- Living Cities Grant
- Local government sustainability efforts
- State agency leadership
Regional Sustainability Planning and Implementation

Examine approaches to planning for and implementing sustainability at a regional scale

Develop **Framework for Regional Sustainability Planning & Implementation**

- Used by organizations and stakeholders
- Adaptable model
Regional Sustainability Planning and Implementation

7 detailed case studies

Funded by Center for Transportation Studies

Guided by Research Advisory Committee

Interface with concurrent sustainability planning efforts

Adaptable model – variety of contexts and users
Regional Sustainability Planning and Implementation

Regions are using sustainability to reframe collaboration with local governments and stakeholders.

Providing a regional framework for local implementation.
Regional Sustainability Planning and Implementation

Making connections across systems
Drawing on local priorities and expertise
Enhancing engagement efforts

infrastructure, public services, transportation, land use, natural resources, governance, economic development, housing, energy, food, education........
Denver Regional Council of Governments
Metro Vision 2035

9 counties, urban to rural

Existing regional plan for transportation and land use – added sustainability

Voluntary implementation through Mile High Compact
Promote regional conversation about sustainability

“Sustainability Cafes”

- What would a sustainable Denver region look like?
- What principles should guide DRCOG’s policy and funding decisions to support a sustainable region?
- What indicators should we use to measure progress?
Urban to rural, highly fragmented governance, significant disparities

Key focus on Economy and Taxes and Governance – sustainable economy

Used working groups to enhance engagement with stakeholders, including private sector
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
GO TO 2040 Plan

1st regional comprehensive plan for Chicago

Includes focus on natural systems

Strong implementation framework – identify responsibilities, grants to local government

Extensive participation and outreach
Welcome to 2040!

By 2040, about 2.8 million more people will live in the Chicago region.

We need your help: How should we plan for this growth?

First, create your own future scenario by trying different choices.

Second, explore different outcomes and tradeoffs of your scenario.

Last, be sure to submit your scenario and tell us what you think!
How much should we invest in roads?

Investments in roads determine how many cars and trucks the system can handle.

Minimum maintenance would barely sustain our current road network.

Moderate increase would somewhat improve the road network and add some capacity.

Significant increase would improve the road network and add considerable capacity.
Measuring Regional Sustainability

Several regional plans connect to sustainability indicators.

Build knowledge – understand local impacts on region.

Aggregate multiple data sets – value-added.

Track performance connected to plan goals.
Victoria, BC Capital Region District –
Regional Sustainability Strategy
Percentage of Labour Force Living & Working in Same Sub-Region

Target Statement

This graph represents the percentage of the labour force that live and work within the Urban Core.

Overview

This indicator estimates the percentage of the labour force that lives and works within the same sub-region.

It is an indicator of community completeness and social and economic sustainability.
By 2026, achieve a minimum jobs/population ratio in the Urban West Shore of 0.35 (employment divided

A balance between jobs and population is an indication of a complete community, and is important to ensure that there are employment opportunities close to where people live. At a sub-regional level, a balanced distribution of jobs and population supports other objectives of the RGS, particularly transportation objectives.

Land use patterns and the spatial distribution of jobs and housing have a significant influence on commuter travel. The closer a person lives to their work, the more likely they are to
Other economy indicators – math/science degrees conferred, patents granted, loans to small businesses, energy use, vacant commercial properties...
Rental HH - Gross Rent is 30% Or More of HH Income - As Pct of All Rental HH
All counties in the 7-county Chicago region

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

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Measuring Regional Sustainability

Broad sustainability indicators practice nationally

Some measurement efforts in Minnesota

- McKnight Regional Sustainability Indicators
- Minneapolis Sustainability Indicators
- Wilder Foundation’s Minnesota Compass
Moving Forward

Much to be learned from other regions

Tailor sustainability definition to regional context

Engage diverse stakeholders/public – be creative

Be specific about implementation steps – but emphasize collaboration
Moving Forward

How will sustainability fit into the Twin Cities region?

Potential to build on Corridors of Opportunity

Possible connection to Regional Development Framework

Opportunity to begin measuring sustainability at a regional scale